

REMARKS

The above-identified application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed August 1, 2005. By the present amendment, claims 1-6 and 10 have been canceled and claims 11-15 have been added. It is respectfully submitted that the claims pending in the application, namely claims 7-9 and 11-15, are fully supported by the specification, introduce no new matter, and are patentable over the prior art.

In the Office Action, claims 1 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Smith et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,799,484). By the present amendment, the Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 10 without prejudice. It is respectfully requested that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn. The Applicants expressly reserve the right to present the canceled claims in one or more continuation applications.

In the Office Action, claims 2-6 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. According to the Office Action, claims 2-6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. On October 26, 2005, the Applicants telephoned Examiner Jackson to discuss the objection to claims 2-6. During the discussion, it became apparent that claims 5 and 6 were inadvertently identified as depending from claim 2 rather than from claim 1. Therefore, the applicants have rewritten claims 5 and 6 as new claims 14 and 15. Canceled claim 2 has been rewritten as new claim 11 and includes all of the limitations of canceled base claim 1. In addition, canceled claims 3-6 have been rewritten as new claims 12-15 respectively that depend from new claim 11. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are also in condition for allowance.

Appl. No. 10/620,160
Amdt. dated October 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action Mailed August 1, 2005

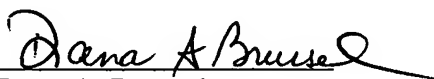
By the present amendment, the Applicants have cancelled claims 2-6 and it is respectfully requested that the objection to these claims be withdrawn.

The Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 7-9 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all claims presently pending in the application, namely claims 7-9 and 11-15, are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early and favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone or personal interview may facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

Carter, DeLuca, Farrell & Schmidt, LLP
445 Broad Hollow Road - Suite 225
Melville, New York 11747
Tel.: (631) 501-5713
Fax: (631) 501-3526


Dana A. Brussel
Reg. No. 45,717
Attorney for Applicant

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS:

**Chief Patent Counsel
U.S. Surgical, a Division of
Tyco Healthcare Group LP
150 Glover Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06856**